

**CITIZEN'S REVIEW PANEL
Maui Section**

**ANNUAL REPORT
7/1/06 - 6/30/07**

I. Introduction

This is the 5th Annual Report of the Maui Citizens' Review Panel, now in its 7th year of existence serving the tri-isle county of Lana'i, Moloka'i and Maui. The Maui CRP has met monthly since its inception and has not had fewer than 8 active members during its tenure.

From its inception, a guiding principle of the Maui CRP was to support the line workers in their effort to fulfill their duties to protect children from abuse and neglect. This has not changed over the years. The issues and recommendations contained in this report relate to the Child Welfare system, its policies and the ability of CWS to implement them.

II. Executive Summary

The Maui CRP found itself dedicating much of its efforts on justifying its existence and the significance of CRP for the state. As the only CRP in the state, the Maui CRP struggled with addressing Maui County based CWS issues and statewide policy issues. The absence of other section CRP made it difficult to address statewide issues. Statewide issue discussions were limited to quarterly CQI meetings and the Annual Statewide CRP meeting.

In reviewing other State Annual Reports, New Mexico and Wyoming to name a few, left the Maui Section CRP envious of the programmatic and budgetary support those CRPs received. One state even had a budget for their CRP. Accordingly, the Maui Section has added a proposed budget in this year's Annual Report.

Nevertheless, the Maui CRP continued to fulfill its CAPTA required responsibilities by evaluating the extent to which the sections and state discharged its duties to protect children from abuse and neglect.

The Maui CRP also identified the strengths of the Maui Section CWS and progress it's made in the past year. They include:

- CWS participation in the Meeting of the Minds
- Staffing and support of the Maui CRP
- Good local-level job recruiting
- CWS staff have been helpful with the Death Review Committee
- CWS staff have been responsive to the DOE regarding suspected child abuse reports
- Experienced, dedicated and caring staff
- Staff open to input to change and/or improve programs, operations

The Maui CRP recognized the following Division-wide strengths:

- ✓ VCM and FSS offers families more than one option
- ✓ Demonstrated flexibility in contracting services to fit the needs of the locale
- ✓ Institutionalized Quality Control process via the ongoing PIP process

The following sections describe the areas the Maui CRP evaluated over the course of the reporting period.

III. Federal Outcome Measures

The attached matrix covers the period from July 2006 to June 2007. Unfortunately, Maui CRP did not receive the data in a timely fashion so analysis and discussion was limited during this reporting period.

The following is a summary and analysis of the attached matrix:

1. Reduce the recurrence of CAN

The Maui section continues to meet federal outcome measure as it had in the previous two FY.

2. Reduce the incidence of CAN in foster care

As noted in previous Annual Reports, the Maui section continues to meet the federal outcome measure in this category.

3. Increase permanency for children in foster care (no federal standard)

Unlike in previous reporting periods, data for this category was not provided.

4. Reduce time in foster care to reunification without increasing re-entry

a. The Maui section met the federal outcome measure in two of the four quarters during this reporting period. It's to be noted that they were within one half of a percent of meeting the federal outcome measure. Accordingly, they met the yearly goal of >76.2%

b. The Maui section, as in the previous two reporting periods, failed to meet the federal outcome measure.

The CRP continues to press the Maui section to analyze this ongoing problem, to determine if this is a policy issue that needs analysis or if casework decisions are the contributing factors.

5. Reduce time in foster care to adoption

As they have in previous reporting periods, the Maui section continues to do extremely well meeting all quarterly and the yearly goal in this federal outcome measure.

6. Increase placement stability

The Maui section, as other sections throughout the state, did poorly in this outcome measure. Although they did not meet any of the quarterly goals, the percentages for all four quarters were within 2 percentage points of the goal.

The CQI continues to review the measurement criteria for this goal given the consistent poor performance by all sections.

IV. Review of the 2006 Annual Report recommendations:

1. Foster Care System

It's recommended that the DHS, as part of the PIP and CQI process, expand its foster care quality control/feedback system that results in the following:

a. increased communication between SW and FP

In her response to the last Annual Report, Social Services Division Administrator Amy Tsark indicated that "increased communication between Social Workers and Foster Parents would be accomplished by a newly required monthly face-to-face contact requirement."

To date, there has been no report of its implementation or results. Nor have there been any other policy or practice changes towards this end.

b. decreased placement difficulties

Amy's response letter cited CQI suggestions to decrease placement difficulties but again, to date, the Maui CRP has not received any report on the implementation of these suggestions nor its results. It appears that, based on the state's poor performance on Federal Outcome Measure #6, that the suggestions either were not implemented or were unsuccessful.

c. increased coordination of mental health referrals

Continuous Quality Improvement Council reports have indicated an increase in coordination and provision of mental health services within Maui County. Various entities that provide services within the state including the Department of Education (DOE); Department of Health (DOH); Child and Adolescent Mental Health Division (CAMHD); and Family Guidance Centers (FGC). Success has been credited to individuals engaging in dialogue to gain understanding of community needs and increased partnering focused on service delivery. Community service agencies are connected to mental health service providers through organized efforts including local coalitions, panels and groups of individuals committed to keeping mental health needs in the forefront.

One exemplary model that captures this effort is the "Meeting of the Minds" (MOM) group. Representatives within this cadre include Judge Geronimo Valdriz of Family Court, and various community partners associated in mental health services within Maui County including Child Welfare Services; DOH; DOE; CAMHD; and the Citizen Review Panel – Maui Section. The coordination of this group has led to an increased knowledge of available mental health services within Maui County; therefore increasing resource and referral opportunities and services provided.

- d. **to improve communication between social workers and foster parents, to create a system of foster parent feedback, and to give foster parents a representative voice, an annual survey of active foster parents should be taken. The survey should measure levels of satisfaction, suggestions or complaints, and recommendations. The results of the survey should be shared with the Maui CRP for review.**

To date, the Maui CRP has not received the results of the survey. In addition, Amy Tsark's response to the 2006 Annual Report noted "DHS' plans to survey both active and exiting foster parents via a questionnaire." Likewise, the Maui CRP has not received any results from this questionnaire.

Jim St. James; a CRP, foster and adoptive parent, Officer on Keiki Kokua Board of Directors, and former foster parent trainer has provided the CRP with most of its foster parent information.

2. Adoptions

- a. **The results of DHS' participation in AdoptUsKids, HOPE Inc., Hawaii Family Forum and Heart Gallery shall be documented and evaluated annually**

The Maui CRP has received minimal information on the results of the DHS's participation in the aforementioned placement agencies. Furthermore, the Maui CRP has not received the annual evaluation of the DHS' participation. It appears the DHS lacks a protocol to list children for adoption, thus the minimal number of foster youth listed with these agencies.

- b. **A database, preferably Internet based, shall be created for the public to easily access the profiles of current legally free foster children awaiting adoption.**

To date there has been no action taken by the DHS to create an Internet based database to list children awaiting adoption, although Social Services Division Administrator Amy Tsark feels this is "noteworthy and would require further discussion and consultation with the Family Court, the Coalition, CWS staff, GAL groups and the youth themselves." Unfortunately, there have been no reports of such discussions and consultations.

However, in her response to the 2006 Annual Report, Amy Tsark noted that "the DHS has created an internal excel database to track Permanent Custody youth who do not have identified prospective adoptive parents."

3. Contract Monitoring

It's recommended that the DHS expand and improve its contract monitoring processes, especially with the change in the duration of POS contracts.

a. improve and expand contract monitoring processes

It is unclear what improvements have been made to the contract monitoring process. In addition, there have been no reports that the process has been expanded with either an increase in staff and/or an increase in monitoring visits/efforts. However, in response to the 2006 Annual Report, Amy Tsark noted "Program Development Administrators and POS monitoring staff monitor contracted services. Furthermore, Section Administrators are expected to have ongoing meeting with POS contractors", a practice the Maui CRP was aware of within their section. Lastly, Amy indicated that "monitoring consists of feedback from CWS staff, clients and providers; quarterly progress reports and site visits by monitoring staff."

The CRP questioned the ability of the Program Development monitoring staff to conduct these monitoring visits given either the inadequate staffing of their department and/or the ongoing vacancies. In the end, the CRP was not convinced that POS contractors were being properly monitored in discharging their duties per their contracts.

4. Division support of the CRP

The CRP recommends that the DHS continue its support of the CRPs in the following manner:

a. Fund air, water and ground transportation for its Molokai and Lanai representatives,

The DHS continues to fulfill its commitment to fund all air, water and ground transportation costs for the Molokai and Lana'i representatives to participate in the CRP.

b. Fund transportation (air, water and ground), logistical and administrative costs for the semi annual Statewide CRP Meetings,

Likewise, the DHS continues to fulfill its commitment to fund all air, water and ground transportation costs for the participants of the Statewide CRP meeting.

c. Promoting CRPs as a valuable asset and an essential part of the CWS system, and not just a condition to receive CAPTA funds.

There have been no reports or evidence of the promotion of CRPs as both a valuable asset and an essential part of the CWS system.

Based on the review of several other state CRP Annual Reports, there appears to be a huge discrepancy between Hawaii's CRP program and those of other states. Which begs the questions, "What is Hawaii's commitment to its CRP and the concept of CRPs?"

5. Meeting of the Minds

The CRP recommends that division promotes the Maui Section's Meeting of the Minds group to other sections, and if applicable, nationally.

There have been no reports or evidence that CWS has promoted the concept of the Maui Section's Meeting of the Minds either statewide or nationally at the Annual National CRP Conference.

SSD Administrator Amy Tsark noted in her 2006 Annual Report response that the "Section Administrators and supervisors participate in inter-agency collaborations to increase coordination and communication, and that since each community is unique, each must come up with its own path. "

She is correct in that each community is unique, and our tri-isle section developed its unique approach to improve service provision to children and families via the Meeting of the Minds. The key is that the Maui CRP initiated and developed the Meeting of the Minds, once again reinforcing the importance of its existence and the importance of having CRPs in other sections. And unlike other inter-agency collaborative efforts, the Meeting of the Minds is spearheaded by a Family Court Judge.

V. 2006-2007 CRP Focus

1. Statewide CRP meeting

As the only viable CRP, the Maui CRP took the lead and hosted the 2006 Annual Statewide CRP meeting at Maui Community College on November 2, 2006. The goal of the meeting was to resurrect the efforts to establish CRPs in the other sections. Fortunately, all but one Section Administrator was in attendance. The Maui CRP presented a summary of what's contributed to its longevity and success, and offered numerous suggestions to CWS staff.

Esther Sherrard and John Walters provided a summary and status report of the DHS' PIP, Program Improvement Plan.

The absence of Director, Lillian Koller and SSD Administrator, Amy Tsark did not go unnoticed by Maui CRP attendees.

2. Membership recruitment

The Maui Section has maintained their existence due to the diligence and commitment of community representatives dedicated to high standard service delivery to children, families and individuals within Maui County and the State of Hawai'i. Our membership consists of representatives of three islands within our county including Maui, Molokai and Lanai. It is imperative that each island is represented by a member that lives and works directly with the community to understand the needs, challenges, and resources available. Within the reporting year, the Maui Section CRP conducted membership recruitment due to the transition of resigning members. We were successful in recruiting five new members that represent Legal Aid Society Hawaii, Department of Education, Ka Hale A Ke Ola Resource Center, Maui Family Support Services, and CAMHD – Maui Family Guidance Center. We continue to recruit a representative from law enforcement and from the island of Molokai.

3. Foster Board payment increase

Most recently, the CRP began discussing the need to have CWS/DHS pursue and initiate steps to increase both foster board rates and difficulty of care payments. Members were not aware of the year of the last increase but some speculated that it has been over 10 years. All agreed that an increase is due, to recognize the efforts, commitment and dedication of foster parents. Furthermore, an increase will help to both recruit and retain foster parents. Lastly, the Maui CRP suggested that increases be tied to the CPI, Consumer Price Index.

4. CWS staffing vacancies

The Maui Child Welfare Services is currently experiencing a high number of staffing vacancies. It was reported that of 54 staffing positions, only 26 are filled, leaving a total of 28 vacancies. CWS Maui has 3 investigators serving the tri-isle county. The impact of service provision to our community is greatly compromised due to the inevitable increase in caseload due to the limited number of staff. Investigators are placed in difficult positions of implementing a "triage" effect of prioritizing what cases require attention. The serious consequence of this type of practice includes cases that have the potential to fall through the cracks. This is a serious concern of the CRP, especially because it directly impacts service delivery to children and families.

CWS on Maui has been an active supporter of the CRP, providing two representatives at each meeting. One representative conducted essential duties including note taking for meeting minute collection; coordination of reports and distribution of pertinent information to all members; agenda preparation and a series of other important duties. This individual resigned from CWS and the position remains vacant. This significantly impacted the CRP in a variety of ways, including a lack of clerical assistance that members came to rely on for informational support. The supervisor of the CWS worker was also a regular participant at monthly CRP meetings; however he is now unable to attend due to the staff shortages.

5. Continuing relationship between Federal Outcome Measures #4a and #4b, reunification rate and re-entry into foster care respectively

There has been less focus on this policy issue since the CRP has not received quarterly data in timely basis. Nevertheless, the aforementioned data indicates that the Maui Section's performance in these two areas have not improved in the last fiscal year. To date there have been no reports or evidence, section or statewide, that any policy changes or casework practices have been enacted to reverse this trend.

The CQI committee has identified a few possible contributing factors to this trend however no changes have been instituted to date.

6. Transitioning foster youth into adulthood, or lack thereof

In Amy Tsark's response to the 2006 Annual Report, she notes the "Department's efforts to enhance and promote transition services for exiting foster youth. These efforts include collaboration with community partners and Hawaii Foster Youth Coalition, a listing of transition services on the DHS website, the use of Youth Circle and EPIC Ohana to reduce homelessness and link youth to their circle of supports, proposing legislation to expand higher education benefits for foster youth to name a few."

ILP (Independent Living Program) services are designed to insure foster youth ageing out of the system are appropriately transitioned to insure continuity of care. However, with the scarce monitoring of POS contractors it is unclear if the Department is meeting the needs of these youth through these contracts.

Granted there are a number of factors that affect an effective transition into adulthood (motivation, confidentiality, prioritizing basic survival skills etc.) however, there does not appear to be any protocol to insure every exiting foster youth receives this service.

7. How to assist other sections in establishing their own CRP

Our CRP has struggled with this endeavor. Except for the Statewide CRP meeting, we have no forum from which to advocate. Without the commitment of the Department and Division, the Maui CRP has little or no authority to move this process along. We will however, continue the almost impossible task of making the Department, Division, Sections and stakeholders aware of the benefits of creating and sustaining a Section CRP.

VI. Strategic Plan

Our CRP met at the end of fiscal year '06-'07 to discuss and determine our focus for the next fiscal year. Below is a summary of our priorities:

1. Survey Central Intake

Now into its third or fourth year, it is unclear how well Central Intake is working. Within Maui County there have been both positive and negative reactions. Without other CRPs there is no other objective assessment of Central Intake's effectiveness throughout the rest of the state.

Thus, to determine if practice is meeting the intent of the Central Intake policy we're asking the Department conduct an analysis of Central Intake. Furthermore, is the Central Intake concept working, if so, how? This is reflected in our recommendation below.

2. Kinship care policy

Similar to the aforementioned Central Intake policy, there have been mixed reviews on the Kinship Care Policy and no mechanism to determine if other Sections share our concerns. Similarly, we're asking the same of the Department in conducting an analysis of the Kinship Care Policy by determining if practice is meeting intent. Furthermore, is the concept meeting the needs of the youth in foster care, if so, how? This too, is reflected in our recommendation below.

3. Recruit CAMHD (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Division) representative

This has been accomplished. Tina Kiyabu-Crowell, QA Specialist from the CAMHD's Maui Family Guidance Center is now a member of our CRP.

4. Decentralize the Division/Department's Personnel Office to the sections

With the high number of vacant positions, hiring of new personnel cannot come soon enough. The Maui Section has been lauded for its assistance in local recruitment of personnel however the ultimate hiring decision still rests with Division on Oahu. The Maui CRP feels Division staff is not as invested in recruiting and hiring Maui CWS as Maui Section staff would be, and other individual sections for that matter. Decentralized Personnel offices should greatly enhance not only increased timeliness of recruiting and hiring but also increase the responsibility each section must assume for their own staffing.

5. Foster board rate and difficulty of care payment increase

As noted in the previous section, the Maui CRP strongly feels foster parents deserve an increase in the foster board rate and difficulty of care payment. It's the CRP's understanding that the DHS must initiate this process through legislative action. However if this can be accomplished internally then the CRP implores the DHS to do so immediately. As noted below in our Recommendations, the CRP is recommending a 30% increase over 6 years in foster board rates and difficulty of care payments, setting rates and payments in three age categories (0-5, 6-12 and 13-18) and to tie future increases to the Consumer Price Index.

To reiterate, the CRP feels not only do foster parents deserve this increase but the increase and pricing structure will help to recruit, retain and recognize current and future foster parents.

VII. Recommendations

1. By June 1, 2008, DHS will have completed an active foster parent satisfaction survey/questionnaire, and have mailed it to all current foster parents. The results of the survey/questionnaire, along with DHS feedback on plans for improvement, will be delivered to the Maui CRP before November 1, 2008.
The CRP should have time to review and give feedback on the draft questionnaire before its final publishing
2. By March 1, 2008, DHS will have all Hawaii children eligible for adoption listed and profiled on the AdoptUSKids website.
3. The results of the last fiscal year of DHS' participation in AdoptUSKids, HOPE Inc., Hawaii Family Forum, and Heart Gallery shall be documented and evaluated, with report delivered to the Maui CRP by February 1, 2008.
4. DHS will send at least one CRP member to the Annual CRP National Conference.
5. DHS will increase the number of monitoring staff to insure 2 monitoring visits per year to each POS contractor.
6. DHS will continue to support and fund all costs for the semi annual statewide CRP meetings.
7. DHS will continue to fund all costs for Molokai's and Lanai's participation in the CRP meetings.

8. DHS will insure the resurrection of the Hawaii, Kauai and Oahu section CRPs by the end of FY 07-08.

9. In conjunction with the Foster Parent Association, DHS will introduce legislation in the 2008 Legislative Session or change Departmental Policy to increase Foster Care Board rates and Difficulty of Care payments 5% each year for the next 6 years, to set rates in three age categories (0-5, 6-12 and 13-18) and tie future increases to the CPI (Consumer Price Index).

10. DHS will determine by 2/08 the feasibility of decentralizing their Personnel Department, and report its findings and plan to the Maui CRP by the end of FY 07-08.

11. DHS will insure a transition plan is developed and implemented by 1/1/08 to insure that all foster youth exiting the CWS/Family Court system are either:

- a. linked with Adult Mental Health
- b. linked with Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
- c. linked with Developmental Disabilities Division (DD)
- d. established with an adequate living environment
- e. reunited with family
- f. have established a post secondary vocational or educational plan and/or
- g. reviewed by the Family Court Judge and/or Guardian Ad Litem.

12. DHS will conduct an analysis of the Central Intake process by 2/08, determining if practice has met the intent and if any policy changes need to be implemented. DHS will provide a report of their findings and recommendations to the Maui Section CRP by the end of FY 07-08.

13. DHS will conduct an analysis of the Kinship Care policy by 2/08, determining if practice is meeting the intent of the policy. Furthermore, DHS will determine if any policy changes need to be implemented, and report their findings and recommendations to the Maui Section CRP by the end of FY 08-08.

14. DHS will fund the Maui CRP budget, as noted below, with CAPTA funds.

VIII. Membership

Island of Lanai:	Butch Gima, Social Worker, Dept. of Health, Adult Mental Health Division	2000-present
Island of Molokai:	Irene Laemoa, Community	2000-2007
Island of Maui:	Frances C. Joswick, MSW, Deputy Director Ka Hale A Ke Ola Resource Center	2000-2007
	Elizabeth A. Ivey, Attorney,	2001-2007
	Patrick Singsank, Program Director Children's Justice Center	2003-present
	Jim St. James, foster & adoptive parent, former foster parent trainer with Hawaii Behavioral Health Officer, Keiki Kokua Board of Directors	2004-present
	Jeny Bissell, Family Health Services Section Supervisor State Department of Health	2004-present
	Debbi Amaral, Director Headstart Preschool Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc.	2005-present
	Heather Brown, Attorney Legal Aid Society Hawaii	2006- present
	Charmaine Bissen, Psychologist Department of Education-SBBH	2006-present
	Becky Woods, Deputy Director Ke Hale A Ke Ola Resource Center	2007-present
	Lucy Feinberg, LSW Maui Family Support Services	2006-present
	Tina Kiyabu-Crowell, QA Specialist CAMHD-Maui Family Guidance Center	2007-present
Staff:	Elladine Olevao, Section Administrator Scott Seto, Supervisor Michelle Christensen Child Welfare Services	
Meetings:	The panel meets once each month on Maui at the conference room of Ka Hale A Ke Ola Resource Center.	

2007-2008 Maui Citizens' Review Panel

BUDGET

	Amount	Other
Personnel		
0.1 FTE Support Staff position (4 hours/week)	3000.00	Meeting coordination, minute recorder, Statewide meeting coordination, other CRP support services SR-
0.05 FTE Supervisorial Staff position (2 hours/week)	3000.00	Provides data and resource information; decision making capabilities/responsibilities SR-24
Operating expense		
Airfare	2000.00	-Annual National Conference- 2 RT x 1000/RT
Inter-island travel	3600.00 2400.00	-Molokai and Lanai monthly travel- 12 trips x 300/trip -Statewide CRP meeting- 20 attendees x 120/trip
Lodging	2000.00	-Annual National Conference-2 x 5 days x 200/night
Ground Trans	960.00 200.00 200.00	-Molokai and Lanai monthly travel-80/meeting x 12 mtgs. -Statewide CRP Meeting- 5 vehicles x 40/vehicle -Annual National Conference- 5 days x 40/day
Per diem	480.00 400.00 800.00	-Molokai and Lanai monthly travel-2 x 20/mtg x 12 mtgs -Statewide CRP meeting- 20 attendees x 20 -Annual National Conference- 2 x 80/day x 5 days
Consumable supplies	300.00	25.00/month
Telephone	600.00	50.00/month
Printing	500.00	
Postage/shipping	100.00	
Equipment		
TOTAL	20,540.00	